Chapter VI

Backgrounds:
Hawaiian Legends and
the Manoa Campus

by Russell McLeod

Manoa, the site of the University of Hawaii campus, is one of the most beautiful valleys of Hawaii and must have inspired the wonder of the ancient Hawaiians, whose name for this place means "huge," or "vast."

In pre-modern times the valley was socially divided into "Manoa-alii" or "royal Manoa" on the west, and "Manoa-kanaka" or "commoners' Manoa" on the east. Foreigners also preferred Manoa-alii, as shown in the spectacular former temple site chosen for the S. N. Castle home on what is now Pu'uhonua Street. From this spot one could look eastward over most of the valley floor, which was once filled with taro fields and farms.

Manoa is also a place associated with several remarkable Hawaiian legends. One of the best known stories concerns Ka-hala-o-puna (the hala of Puna), a stunningly beautiful woman whose tragedy explains the frequent Manoa rains. She was murdered six times by the same man.

The fragrant hala trees of Puna are a Hawaiian metaphor for human physical beauty. "Ninu Puna po i ke 'ala" (overwhelming is the perfume of Puna) suggests an unusually good-looking person. Ka-hala-o-puna's name was well-chosen; her beauty seems to have become known all over much of O'ahu. Her home was in the area of what is now our Lyon Arboretum. Her mother was named Ka-ua-kuahine (the Manoa rain) and her father was called Ka-haukanii (Manoa wind).

Ka-hala-o-puna was engaged while still a child to Ka-uhi, a young Kailua chief. His family often sent the girl gifts of Kailua poi and Kawainui fish.

As Ka-hala-o-puna matured, her beauty became known all over the valley and even inspired two ugly
Water, by Honolulu artist David Asherman, is a mural, nine by fourteen feet in Bilger Hall, which shows the Hawaiian god Kane bringing forth water to create Manoa Stream, which runs along the eastern edges of the campus. Kane’s brother, Kanaloa, catches the water, perhaps to make the fermented awa beverage as a bird hovers above. Kanewai (the waters of Kanel), the name of a large underground pool with the “healing waters of Kane,” is located somewhere near the Makai Campus. According to Hawaiian folklore, fish swam underground from the sea to this pool to eavesdrop on the fishermen who frequented this area. Water is one of four murals done by artists in 1951–55 who became students of Jean Charlot who had just arrived in Hawaii to teach the true fresco technique he had practiced in Mexico. The tree ferns in Asherman’s mural matched the real hapu’u that originally graced the adjacent courtyard. The ferns no longer grow in Bilger Hall. Photo by Paul S. K. Yuen (1982)

The artist’s eye can transform a hodgepodge into an integrated whole. Here, Chinese artist George Jyh-yih Hsu leaves nature dominant, with only the Korean Studies Center (right) and the Biomedical Science Building (center) in a misty Manoa Valley, with Roundtop rising to the west (left). The campus architecture has been selectively blended into a consistent and ideal traditional Chinese environment that is sure to nurture sagehood. Courtesy George Jyh-yih Hsu
men to go down to Waikīkī wearing leis which they claimed were love gifts from the Mānoa girl.

It happened that Ka-uhi was among the many ali‘i who gathered at Waikīkī when the surf of Kalehua-wehe was high. Ka-uhi heard the story being spread by the two ugly men and was so enraged that he started out for Mānoa at dawn one day, intending to kill his fiancée, whom he had never met. He stopped to rest midway under a hala tree. Before resuming his journey he broke off a bunch of hala fruit and carried it along with him. He found Ka-hala-o-puna and persuaded her to follow him. Not far away, after accusing her of being unfaithful, he killed her by a blow to the head with the hala fruit and buried her on the spot.

An owl god, a relative of the girl, had been watching, and it now flew down and uncovered the body, brushing the dirt away with its wings and breathing life back into the girl’s nostrils. The bruise on her temple was healed when the owl touched it with his face.

Ka-hala-o-puna revived and immediately went to find and plead with Ka-uhi. He told her to follow him again. This time he killed her at the top of the ridge separating Mānoa from Nu’uanu. The owl brought her back to life again and she rejoined Ka-uhi, who soon murdered her again at Waolani ridge in Nu’uanu. The owl saved her, but Ka-uhi murdered her at Kilohana, in Kalihi Valley. It was only at her fifth death and burial at Pōhākea, in the mountains above Ewa, that the owl was unable to rescue her. Ka-uhi had buried her beneath a koa tree, and the owl’s claws only got tangled in the many roots.

Another bird, the ‘elepaio, had seen everything, and it flew to tell the girl’s parents. In the meantime Ka-hala-o-puna’s still warm body was found by a young chief, who carefully took it back to Mō‘ili‘ili, his home, where the girl was revived, partly through treatment in the healing waters of Mau-okī, one of the famous underground water pools of Mō‘ili‘ili. Perhaps this is the thirty-foot wide cavern under King Street, near University Pharmacy.

Her rescuer wanted to marry her, but Ka-hala-o-puna remained faithful to Ka-uhi. The young man then conspired to arrange Ka-uhi’s death. Ka-uhi was tricked into wagering his life on the question of whether or not Ka-hala-o-puna was still alive. At a grand ceremony in Waikīkī, Ka-uhi of course lost his wager and was immediately escorted to a waiting imu, in the area where the Outrigger Hotel now stands and was roasted alive. Ka-hala-o-puna was given to the man who had saved her.

During the night a tidal wave swept the beach where Ka-uhi had been roasted. His bones were retrieved by the shark god, Ka-uhi’s relative, who had in fact caused the wave.

Ka-hala-o-puna lived happily for about two years, but one day, ignoring earlier warnings from her relatives, she decided to go out surfing. Ka-uhi, in the form of a shark, caught her just outside the reef and bit her in two, carrying the remains to the ocean off Wai’anae, where he devoured them.

When Ka-hala-o-puna’s parents heard of her sixth and final death, they transformed themselves into their namesakes, the Mānoa wind and rain. In upper Mānoa, the father, Ka-hau-kani, the wind, takes the visible form of a hau tree thicket, perhaps the one in Paradise Park. The mother, Ka-ua-kuahine, the Mānoa rain, is always with us. Mānoa people used to say, “Oh, there comes Hine with her tiresome tears!”

Mānoa was the residence of the owl king, who lived on Pu‘u Pueo, perhaps in the area of the present Hillside Avenue. The story of Ka-hala-o-puna shows the friendly side of the owls, but they can also be terrible enemies.

A certain Kapo‘i had befriended the owls, building a heiau for them in Mānoa, but the O‘ahu king, Kākūhihewa, disapproved and held Kapo‘i as a prisoner awaiting execution in Waikīkī. The owls heard of this and the owl king in Mānoa sent out a call to the owls of all the islands to gather on O‘ahu. On the day when Kapo‘i was to be sacrificed, the owls swarmed in great clouds around Kākūhihewa’s heiau. The warriors, priests and chiefs tried to drive them away, but the owls flew down and tore at the men’s eyes and faces, scratched dirt over them and defecated on them.
Kapo‘i was freed. Kākuhihewa said to him, "Your god has mana, greater than my god. Your god is a true god!"

Near the Hale Aloha dormitories is a place called Kānewai, "the waters of Kāne." Water appeared here when the great god Kāne drove his spear into the ground. The water of Kāne can make old people young, sick people healthy. Old stories describe our Kānewai as an underground pool, "mauka of King Street." The present Kānewai Lane and park lie east of Mānoa Stream and of course "mauka of King Street." In the southwest corner of Kānewai Park on Dole Street is a well which the Board of Water Supply calls "Cleghorn-Kānewai." It is not clear how the name Cleghorn became associated with this well. Archibald Cleghorn was an Englishman who married Princess Likelike, sister of Lili‘uokalani. He was the father of Princess Ka‘iulani and was serving as governor of O‘ahu at the time of the overthrow of the Hawaiian government in 1893. During the Hawaiian royalist uprising of January 1895, a small group of royalists were hidden for a time in "the thick growth below Kānewai Spring," near the home of the woman Pae‘aina Nalua.

People used to say Mānoa girls are pretty because they have as foster parents the Mānoa wind and rain, the parents of beautiful Ka-hala-o-puna.

What appear to be cloud formations hanging over the mountains at the upper end of Mānoa are actually the dog, Poki. He was best seen on a moonlit night when the viewer stood on the sacred bell rock of Mō‘ili‘ili. The rock had the power of giving clear vision. Poki sometimes curls himself up, or he hangs by his hind legs from the mountain, with his head and paws extending down into Mānoa. At other times he stretches himself out as far as Nu‘uanu, or even across the whole of O‘ahu.

Kamehameha I lived for a time in a big cave on the east side of Mānoa Stream. The cave was said to be connected with Pālolo Valley. Many UH-Mānoa students know of the several caves near the stream; in recent years there have even been complaints that persons were living in them. At least one cave did show signs of being lived in, but the occupant had departed, perhaps for Pālolo.

**Ka Aina: Where the Land Came From**
*by Charles S. Bouslog*

The origin of the College of Hawaii, the predecessor of the University, may be traced back to the 1862 Morrill Act funds for "land grant" colleges. The federal government could not "grant" land in Hawaii as it did for most states, but there was a guarantee of $30,000 a year for several years, which increased to $50,000 for a time. The eager response in Hawaii was a legislative action of May 25, 1905, which by amendment, originally called for Lahainaluna on Maui as the site. Mountain View, above Hilo, was also "amended," but these pork barrel loyalties eventually lost out to Oahu. The final approval on March 25, 1907, specified Manoa. A quickly appointed Board of Regents had its first organizing session six weeks later, May 7, 1907, with Territorial Governor George R. Carter. They met often and assiduously. On May 9, the "president" of the Board said that "he had been looking over several sites for the new College..." He asked the other regents "to look up favorable sites... [and to] meet 9am Sunday 12th at Punahou & Wilder... to inspect the various sites..." By the following Thursday, May 16, "interest centered on Highland Park and the Government land of Puahia." One regent had brought along a tentative offer from C. S. Desky on Blocks 4 and 7 in Highland Park" at $1350 an acre for some 10.62 acres. They met again on June 6 to discuss efforts to obtain other portions of Highland Park. There were problems with options held by Mid-Pacific Institute for its own future expansion.

The minutes of January, 1908, report a protest to Governor Frear (who had succeeded Carter) "against the Board of Health granting permission to use Blocks 5 and 6 of Highland Park as a cemetery." To forestall
such a dolorous outlook for a campus devoted to the future, the regents hastened to acquire Blocks 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 8 of Highland Park. The cemetery is not mentioned again.

From this time on, the minutes record repeated calls for a “comprehensive plan” for the future campus. Alas, the “orienting” of the new campus was determined by the Morrill Act, which saw “land grant” colleges as occupying large squares or rectangles of empty government land, arranged by earnest surveyors along the cardinal points of the compass. Thus the original quadrangle of so many campuses (and of our university too) is laid out on a true compass base, ignoring in the process our makai/mauka orientations, ignoring entirely the flow of our trade winds in the first and major construction, Hawaii Hall.

By September 17, 1908, the board had acquired both by exchange and by territorial grant some 41 acres, with another 23 acres under negotiation. Through much of the next year there was conflict between appraised values and landowners’ desires. Then it was discovered that the upper lands adjacent to Mid-Pacific had some inappropriate zig-zag lines (perhaps the remains of former kuleanas), and for many years afterward there were friendly exchanges of small units.

In the journal, Hawaiian Forester and Agriculturist, President John W. Gilmore wrote (at the end of 1908): “We have also secured about 43 acres of land for a campus in one of the most beautiful valleys in the suburbs of Honolulu and negotiations are underway for considerable more land. When these lands are secured, when the necessary buildings are built, and when the campus is laid out, we will have one of the most beautiful College grounds in the country.”

In a letter that he wrote to the board on May 8, 1911, we note that all was not yet idyllic on these grounds. “Rapid progress is being made in bringing the Puahia lands into service but . . . the Hawaiians now dwelling on the land are an obstacle. They are scattered over the land in about seven groups. One group tills the land. Some of them carouse and loaf a great deal. . . .” He suggested that perhaps they could “be segregated on the Southeast corner of the property . . . for two years or such time as they could find a dwelling place elsewhere.” A week later he gave more details and his position had hardened; “. . . they are scattered at random . . . sanitary and moral conditions are not promoted by their presence.” Now he wanted the attorney general to remove “these people entirely from the land.” On July 11, 1911, we learn that the attorney general “has signified his willingness to remove the squatters from the land and . . . at once.”

Other troublesome removals were also necessary. The eastern areas where the farm and the first classroom building would be situated had been both kula (dry pasture) and kalo (wet fields for taro). The rock walls were an immense problem. Professor Frederick G. Krauss (in reminiscences of 1937) said: “. . . when the college took over the tract of land which was to become the future farm, it was all cut up into small stone-walled fields, ranging in area from one-tenth to one-fourth of an acre. These fields were farmed by individual Chinese and Hawaiian tenants . . . most of the tillage [by the collegiate farmers] during the first five years was done with dynamite and crowbar! Five thousand cubic yards of stone was removed from the land from the stone walls alone. Besides that there was a large amount of surface and buried rock. Twenty-two acres were cleared during the first ten years. . . .” The aggregated rocks made a pile at the future site of Hawaii Hall five feet deep, spread over an acre. He recalled that it was sold for building or as ballast for ships, and that Percy Pond had the contract.

The contract became weighty. Gilmore wrote to the regents on July 10, 1911, that Pond had contracted to remove the rocks in sixty days. But on August 28 Gilmore had to report that Pond now wanted to renegotiate his contract; he was losing money.

The first building, in 1909, was a dairy barn and attached farm office. Students were helping in tree planting, the first being perhaps in April of that year. The Hawaii Collegian of June 1910 refers to Arbor Day and has a mysterious picture of a meadowy
campus with many trees, obviously at some remove from the rock-strewn fields.

The first Commencement was June 3, 1912. Hawaii Hall, liberated from the acre of rocks, was ready for use in September, 1912. Of equal importance, a sewer connection to Metcalf Street had been made a year earlier.

Scattered Hawaiians had not been the only persons to interfere with the land. Hermann Focke and Walter Wall had sold the new college much of the former Metcalf land in Highland Park. After farming got going, Focke insisted on going back and forth through the campus (presumably with cows and horses), alleging that he had reserved a right-of-way. President Gilmore became much exasperated and wrote a fiery protest to the regents; Governor Frear responded, suggesting a more relaxed attitude and a search for friendly negotiations. Mr. Focke was the president of Hoffschlaeger & Co. and was occasionally within diplomatic status as consul at times for Belgium and Chile.

Not all of the early historical sketches agree on the land available when the campus finally opened to something more than dairy cows and collegiate farmers. Arthur Dean in 1926 thought the acreage at the end of 1910 had been 59 acres. The Hawaii Alumnus counted 44.5 acres.

In 1914, recently arrived President Dean found the campus in a pitiful state. The legislators were also concerned. The Senate Journal in 1915 complains that the "unattractive surroundings of the college tend to discourage attendance. The almost impassable roads and generally unkempt aspect of the grounds. . . ."

By 1928, the campus had grown to 101.48 acres. Archibald A. Dunn, in the office of the Commissioner of Public Lands, sent a summary of seventeen years of executive orders to University Treasurer, Gerald Kinnear:

No. 3: January 17, 1911, 29.30 acres in Puahia (originally Crown Land).

No. 28: March 26, 1916, 2.65 acres by purchase.

No. 34: July 29, 1915, 15.87 acres in Highland Park, obtained by exchange; and 30.34 acres in Highland Park from Walter E. Wall and Hermann Focke by purchase on August 18, 1909; and 16.90 acres by exchange from Mid-Pacific Institute in 1915.

No. 278: June 3, 1927. 2.07 acres from Bishop Estate (at $7,967 an acre); and the Aquarium site in 1923.

Statehood brought about a radical shift in the relationship of the University to the land it occupied. Under territorial government, the land was really on loan; the Territory had title. But now the University had become "body corporate," and could hold the land in fee. The new state constitution stated, "The University of Hawaii is hereby established as the state university and constituted a body corporate. It shall have title to all the real and personal property now or hereafter set aside or conveyed to it. . . ." One effect has been that now the State may occasionally choose to lease land to the University, rather than set it aside, because once given, such land became University property. Executive orders already on the books were the instrument that conveyed title to the University. A new executive order, No. 1807, consolidated most of these earlier orders.

In 1982, the 101 acres of 1928 have quadrupled to 427. The original observatory site at the top of Kaimuki plain, 6,974 square feet, was sold in 1979 by public auction for $187,000. The Aquarium site had been obtained in 1919 from William G. Irwin (who had bought it in 1896), and exchanged for the new site nearby with the City and County. In 1958, its 2.35 acres were transferred to fee by Executive Order No. 1817. The Quarry land, dealt with in another chapter, is part of the Makai Campus, which has 88.6 acres. On the Central Campus, the College of Education occupies 15.4 acres. The East-West Center has the use of 21 acres, on which it is a tenant so long as it continues to carry out the educational and research objectives of its establishment in 1960. The Pineapple
Research Institute land on Dole Street (with Krauss Hall) of 5.08 acres was purchased in 1970.

The Biomedical building and the Auxiliary Services area are on 21.312 acres obtained from Mid-Pacific Institute. Negotiations had started in 1947, and the property was finally conveyed by Executive Order No. 1739 in 1956, and included in 1958 as university property by No. 1807.

The *Mauka* Campus is close to the Central Campus, but is not contiguous. It was obtained in 1968, at the time of many changes in the area where the Manoa Marketplace is now located. These University parcels lie along both sides of Kolowalu Street and Woodlawn Drive. The University of Hawaii Press (across from Noelani School) is on 1.605 acres. The Astronomy Institute next door occupies 3.367 acres. An additional parcel lying mostly on the eastern side of Woodlawn Drive totals 9.914 acres. Here there are the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s fruit fly laboratories, several tropical agriculture greenhouses, and a dog training facility called “Eye of the Pacific,” temporarily located here. Large plots at Woodlawn and Lowry are not in use and are heavily overgrown with haole-koa. There were originally 30 acres in this entire *Mauka* Campus area, but two were ceded to the state for the extension of Woodlawn Drive, and the most *mauka* parcel now lies on both sides of the street.

The Lyon Arboretum, at the northwestern head of Manoa Valley, with a well-forested 124 acres was obtained from the Hawaii Sugar Planters’ Association by deed on July 1, 1953. The deed restricts the use of the land to the University only as an arboretum and botanical garden.

There remain some tantalizing historical problems. The grantees of land at the Mahele (mostly 1848-50) have their names recorded forever in all subsequent deeds and title search leads back to the first owner. All but one of these names for campus land were Hawaiian. Names seen are: Ewaloa, Kapehana, Kaumakapili, Mooiki, Ono, Poonui, Puoa, Hakuole. Charles Kanaina (the father of King Lunalilo) at mid-century was the owner of much of the *Mauka* Campus and of the large areas now in the Lyon Arboretum. For most of these men, it is a one-time legal enshrinement; few of the names are seen again, except in deed.

I have attempted to trace the ownership changes of some of the original grants: 718, 882, 1744, 1748, 1828 (see the 1882 map on p. 186).

In the “Native Register,” (p. 270) Ewaloa signed with his mark. There is reference to his widow in 1876, and to an heir in 1881 when the land passed into the hands of Emma Davison. No more Ewaloa.

Hakuole has modern descendants but the land is no longer theirs. For Land Grant 1744, he made his mark in the “Native Register” and testified: “I got this land in 1830 . . . for taro land for cultivating sweet potato at Kawailele in the land of Lui Palani (Louis French), the *konohiki.” This was on December 3, 1847. An heir sold to Ilikealani in 1864. The family continued in the valley. One man is listed as a Manoa taro planter in the city directory of 1888. In 1894–95 one is listed as living in Manoa. The last *kuleana* seems to have been sold by the mortgagor to a Magoon in 1896.

A map of Manoa Valley was issued in 1882. Only the campus portion appears here. Heavily memorialized is Theophilus Metcalf, who is shown as having had an initial ownership of much of the Central Campus. Ewaloa and Hakuole are shown for areas at the upper end of the Central Campus. Today the only memorial for Metcalf is the street, which ends at, and points to, the very center of the campus. Most of what lies beyond was once his. Thrum’s *Annual* for 1892 (an issue full of information about Manoa) refers to the “old Metcalf homestead, the approach to which is by way of Sea View. There is no roadway connecting it with the valley proper at this time."

Metcalf, in his brief 48 years (1818–1866), was a man of many talents and careers, and deserves more than a street as his memorial. An upstate New Yorker, he was a civil engineer when he was only 21 and a planner for the first railroads in Michigan. Because of ill health, he tried for a warmer climate, sailing around the Horn (never fewer than 140 days), arriving in Honolulu in 1842, when he was 24. He
In this map for 1882, the future Metcalf Street is marked with X's. "Puahia" is east of Pilipili, marked here as "Kuleanas not located." Govt. Survey Map No. 1068. Baldwin Survey, (1882)

The "College Hills" subdivision now appears. Note that the Quarry is located on the map, bottom right corner. The trolley car route to the University (via Punahou) is indicated by a broken line. Map of Manoa in 1901
seems to have been the first Daguerrean photographer in the islands, advertising in 1845, but this sortie failed. He was also a surveyor and we are told that he was the only one in Honolulu in 1843. (Very good years for surveyors were soon to come.) He was a developer of water facilities in Nuuanu, then a Marshal, then prison commissioner (soon resigning in disgust with the conditions). He did the original survey of the Oahu College (Punahou) lands in 1848. He became a sugar planter on the island of Hawaii.

Metcalf died in Oakland, California, while taking his eldest daughter, Emma (who would become famous as Emma Beckley, then Nakuina) to attend Mills College. There were three daughters and a son by two wives (both of whom were probably Hawaiian). The Metcalf role with Manoa land continued for many years. It began before the Mahele, with 4.86 acres in 1847. A letter from G. M. Robertson to the land commissioner lists the known landowners in Manoa of this year. In this long list are only two western names: Hannah Hooper and T. Metcalf. The next year he bought another 16.43 acres. In 1852 (after three years efforts), he got 54 acres in Pilipili (see map of Manoa, p. 186), for a total of 75.29 acres. All were purchased from the government.

The estate went to his children. Metcalf’s son, Frank, was busy buying and selling pieces of the Manoa land; most had been sold by 1882—when the map memorialized the original holdings. The sugar plantation near Hilo was taken over for its mortgage in 1870, four years after Metcalf’s death.

It is difficult to follow the trail of land ownership here. The Hawaiian names begin to disappear in the mid-1860’s and early 1870’s. The grantor/grantee books in the Bureau of Conveyances display many long lists of properties held by attorneys acting as trustees or administrators. Ownership had been interrupted. One may suspect that at times whole families died in the nineteenth century epidemics, or fled Honolulu to avoid the death toll. Immediately after the Mahele began there was the 1848-49 epidemic of measles, whooping cough, and flu in which some 10,000 died. In 1853, from 5,000 to 6,000 died of small pox. In 1857, flu and dengue fever killed “many.” In 1870-01, scarlet fever caused a “great” death toll. The Hawaiian population of 70,000 in 1853 was down to 40,000 by 1884 (to which may be added 4,200 part Hawaiians).

A 1955 survey of landowners in Manoa having two or more acres contains only one Hawaiian name, Akau, and one widely known Hawaiian family, Woolsey, who had 55.9 acres.

By 1907-10, when the first campus lands were being obtained, the remaining Hawaiians were, as we have noted in the Regents’ minutes, “squatters” on the land. Thrum, in 1892, strikes the elegiac note: “The former residents of the valley have passed away, and few of the present inhabitants are living on the land of their fathers, or continuing their industries.”